

Meeting Summary
Maine Citizen Trade Policy Commission
March 31, 2014
Room 334, State House
Augusta, Maine

Members Present: Senator John Patrick, Senator Roger Sherman, Representative Sharon Anglin Treat, Representative Jeff McCabe, Steve Cole, Pamela Taylor, John Palmer, Mike Karragiannes, Dr. Joel Kase, Wade Merrit, Bob Umphrey, Linda Pistner

Staff: Lock Kiermaier (Contract)

After determining that the statutory requirement that 11 members must be present to officially convene had been satisfied, CTPC Chair Representative Sharon Anglin Treat convened the meeting at approximately 1:15 PM.

To begin the meeting, Representative Treat asked Commission members to introduce themselves.

Discussion of 2014 CTPC Assessment

During its previous meeting on February 24, 2014, the CTPC reviewed the Assessment process. By law, the CTPC is required to conduct a biennial Assessment “*of the impacts of international trade agreements on Maine's state laws, municipal laws, working conditions and business environment.*” (10 MRSA §11(9)C). The CTPC considered a list of possible candidates at its 2/24/14 meeting and authorized the Chairs and staff person Lock Kiermaier to develop a descriptive piece about the Assessment process and to solicit possible candidates for their interest in conducting an Assessment focusing on the TTIP and its possible effects on agriculture in Maine with specific attention to:

- Farm-to-School and other procurement provisions favoring local food and agriculture; and
- Agricultural policies including direct and indirect subsidies relevant to Maine such as dairy supports and tax policies favoring farming easements.

Mr. Kiermaier reported that significant interest had been shown by Karen Hansen-Kuhn, Director of International Strategies for the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy located in Washington DC. Mr. Kiermaier reminded the CTPC that Ms. Hansen-Kuhn had testified on agricultural matters by phone at the CTPC’s most recent public hearing and also informed them that she had recently authored a paper directly pertinent to this year’s assessment topics entitled, “Promises and Perils of the TTIP; Negotiating a Transatlantic Agricultural Market” (October 2013). In expressing her interest in being considered for as a candidate for conducting the assessment, Ms. Hansen-Kuhn indicated that she was hopeful that she could partner with a local source that was significantly knowledgeable about Maine agriculture and related policies.

Upon consideration of Ms. Hansen-Kuhn's suggestion, and after consultation with the CTPC Chairs, Mr. Kiermaier contacted John Piotti, former legislator and current President of the Maine Farmland Trust, to gauge his possible interest in partnering with Ms. Hansen-Kuhn on conducting the assessment. Mr. Kiermaier also reminded the CTPC that Mr. Piotti had also testified at the recent CTPC public hearing and that his testimony on dairy subsidies had partially triggered the CTPC interest in this year's assessment topic. Mr. Kiermaier reported to the CTPC that Mr. Piotti had relayed to him his interest in the partnership with Ms. Hansen-Kuhn to conduct the 2014 Assessment.

Mr. Kiermaier presented the CTPC with brief biographies and resumes for Ms. Hansen-Kuhn and Mr. Piotti. After a discussion, CTPC member Dr. Joel Kase made a motion that the 2014 CTPC Assessment be conducted by Ms. Hansen-Kuhn and Mr. Piotti and that staff should pursue completion of the necessary contract to accomplish this responsibility. This motion was seconded by John Palmer and approved unanimously by the members present.

Discussion of possible written CTPC testimony for Committee on Ways and Means

On the next agenda item, Mr. Kiermaier referred commission members to 2 page announcement from the US House Ways and Means Committee which describes an April 3, 2014 hearing on President Obama's 2014 Trade Policy Agenda which will include in-person testimony from USTR Michael Froman. The announcement also invites written testimony to be submitted by April 17, 2014.

After discussion, CTPC member Representative Jeff McCabe made a motion that CTPC staff be authorized to work with the CTPC Chairs to develop written testimony which draws upon previous CTPC letters and positions and to submit this written testimony from the CTPC to the House Ways and Means Committee. This motion was seconded by Senator John Patrick and unanimously approved by all the members present.

Discussion of attendance at TTIP stakeholder meeting in Washington DC in mid-May

Next, CTPC Chair Representative Sharon A. Treat informed the CTPC that there was likely to be another TTIP stakeholders sponsored by the USTR which will be held in mid-May in Washington DC. Representative Treat also informed the CTPC that there appears to be adequate funds in the CTPC account to accommodate the travel costs of perhaps 2 CTPC members to this meeting.

During a discussion of this possibility, Representative Treat urged that any member interested in representing the CTPC at this meeting should follow through with a request to the Chairs. Upon further discussion, without a formal motion or vote, the members present urged that Representative Treat should attend and agreed that any other interested member should also attend. Representative Treat pledged to inform the CTPC if and when such a meeting is scheduled.

Review of current status of the TTP and TTIP (Representative Sharon Anglin Treat)

Due to an impending need for the legislative members of the CTPC to return to an afternoon session of the Legislature, Representative Treat kept her remarks short by saying that not much visible progress had been made on either the TPP or the TTIP and referred to the various article of interest that were being presented as the final item on the agenda.

Articles of interest

As the final item on the agenda, staff person Lock Kiermaier presented a summary of 20 articles pertaining to international trade subjects. Commission members reviewed the summary document as well as copies of the 20 articles.

Adjournment

Representative Treat adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:00 PM.